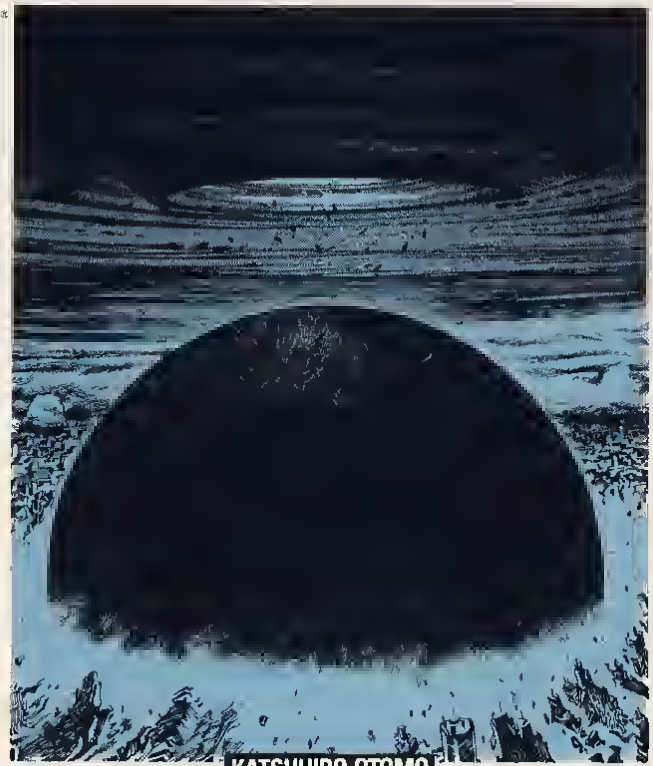
AKIRA 16 ™



KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 16

AKIRA UNLEASHED

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

The year is 2030. The world is rebuilding from World War III. In **Neo-Tokyo**, plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell. There, a band of teenaged delinquents led by **Kaneda** encounter **Number 26**—a child named **Takeshi** who uses extraordinary telekinetic abilities to injure **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends.

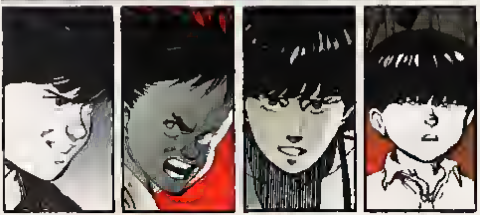
As a result **Kaneda** and **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by a man known only as the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the Colonel's activities.

Among the resistance, **Kaneda** meets **Kay**—a girl he alternately maddens and tries to seduce—and Kay's "brother" **Ryu**. Other important resistance members include Ryu's superior, the opposition party leader **Nezu**, and a powerful religious leader with strong precognitive gifts, **Lady Miyako**.

The **Colonel** has a number of children like **Number 26** under his control. Each child possesses a distinct set of psychic talents and is identified by a number marked on the hand. At one time, **Lady Miyako** was **Number 19** in this series. Another of the children is the mental giant **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been buried beneath the earth's surface, suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The Colonel's staff subjects **Tetsuo** to painful experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in the boy, who is redubbed **Number 41**. Unfortunately as his powers appear, a monstrous side of Tetsuo's nature also appears. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree, murdering one of Kaneda's friends and even attacking **Kaneda**. Then **Tetsuo** sets out in search of **Akira** whose powers he fears may rival his own.

The psychic children, who also fear Akira's power and worry about the disaster **Tetsuo** may unleash, use their talents to help **Kaneda** and **Kay** follow **Tetsuo** to the Olympic site where **Akira** rests.



Kaneda Tetsuo Kay Akira

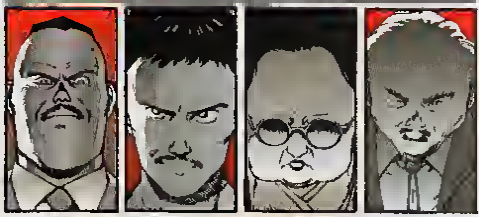
The **Colonel** follows with his troops and scientists. As **Tetsuo** easily repels soldiers armed with the most sophisticated weaponry, the scientists monitoring Akira's cryogenic sleep realize that even in hibernation, Akira's power is responding to Tetsuo's psychic energy. As **Kay** and **Kaneda** watch from hiding, **Tetsuo** reaches Akira's resting place, the cryonic chamber begins to crack from within. **Akira** emerges.

The paranormal giant is still dazed and weak with the aftereffects of his coma. **Kay** and **Kaneda** follow as **Akira** and **Tetsuo** make their way to the surface.

Terrified of what may occur, the **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**. The two are separated by the blasts. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, but **Tetsuo** is less fortunate. The laser strikes his left arm.

Following the disaster, Neo-Tokyo is placed in a state of military emergency. "Caretaker robots" patrol the streets, dealing harshly with looters and restoring order. The **Colonel** successfully conceals the truth about what has occurred despite leaks to the media. But he is discredited and made a scapegoat following the disaster. The **Colonel** decides to use the emergency as an excuse to hunt down and utterly destroy the resistance.

Kay and **Kaneda** take shelter with **Chiyoko**, a formidable woman in the resistance. **Nezu**, planning to exploit **Akira** for his own purposes, has **Kay** bring the



The Colonel **Ryu** **Lady Miyako** **Nezu**

child to him and orders his staff to kill the three resistance fighters. They manage to escape and go to Nezu's house, where **Akira** is hidden. By the time **Nezu** arrives home, the government has been overthrown by the Colonel's inner circle, and a provisional military regime is in place.

Kaneda, **Kay**, and **Chiyoko** manage to free **Akira**. Only to have him stolen from them again...this time by **Sakaki**—leader of a trio of young psychics trained in techniques of espionage and infiltration. Her partners, **Miki** and **Mozu**, and she are working covertly for **Lady Miyako**, trying to avert the catastrophe the great psychic fears Nezu's betrayal may cause. The **Colonel** has also come on the scene, with his troops and his gifted children...and is frantically trying to find **Akira** before he fully awakens. mayhem erupts, with **Kaneda**, **Kay**, and **Chiyoko** in the thick of it. **Nezu** corners **Sakaki** and **Akira**, but before **Nezu** can do them any harm, **Miki** sacrifices her life, enabling the pair to escape. Enraged, **Nezu** orders his soldiers to bring them back, dead or alive.

On the Colonel's orders, **Takashi** corners **Mozu**. When she refuses to reveal the name of her teacher, he kills her during a psychic showdown. **Sakaki** hides **Akira** in a dumpster, planning to go back for him after she has evaded their pursuers. Instead, the boy is found by **Ryu**, who is completely unaware of Akira's identity until they encounter **Nezu**. **Nezu** blurts out the child's name. By this time, **Ryu** has ample evidence that his former master has repeatedly double-crossed the entire resistance movement and **Ryu** personally. When **Nezu** draws a weapon and attempts to kill **Ryu** and **Akira**, **Ryu** shoots him.

Sakaki—traumatized by her friends' deaths, but determined to complete her mission—catches up with **Ryu**. She beats him in a fight, and again regains control of **Akira**. However **Kaneda**, **Kay**, and **Chiyoko** arrive in time for **Kaneda** to knock **Sakaki** for a loop and prevent her escape.

Then all of them—**Akira** and the fighters from all the splinter groups within the resistance—are cornered by the **Colonel**, his children, and the army.

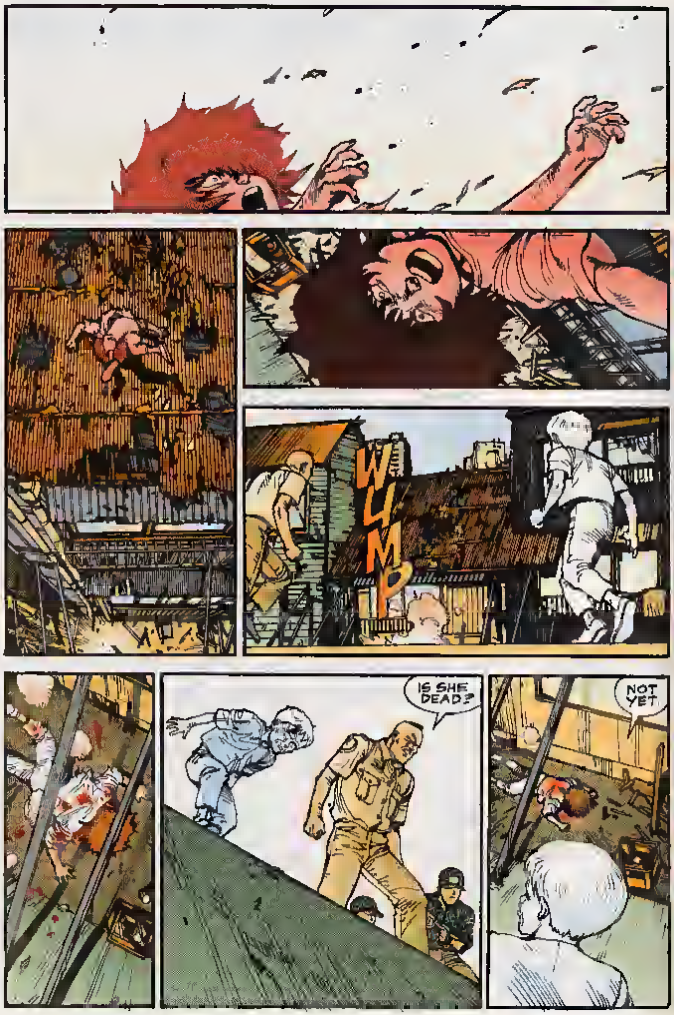
Chiyoko

Takashi

Kiyoko

Sakaki

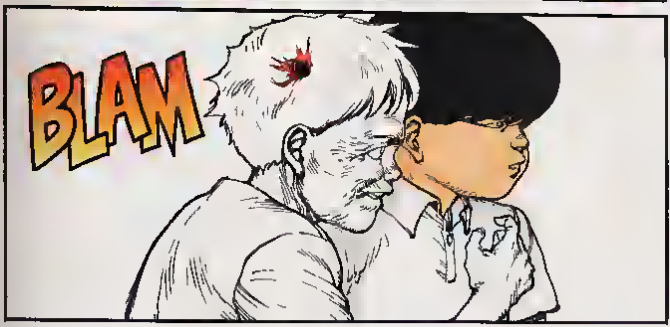
!
SSH
AAH--!
THERE!
DON'T LET HER GO!
FIRE!
budda budda budda


WUMP
IS SHE DEAD?
NOT YET

GO AND GET HER. THERE ARE SOME TESTS I WANT TO RUN ON HER LATER.
YES, COLONEL.
GRIIN
GRIN
AKIRA!
OW! OW! THAT HURTS!! LEGGO ME!
KNOCK IT OFF!

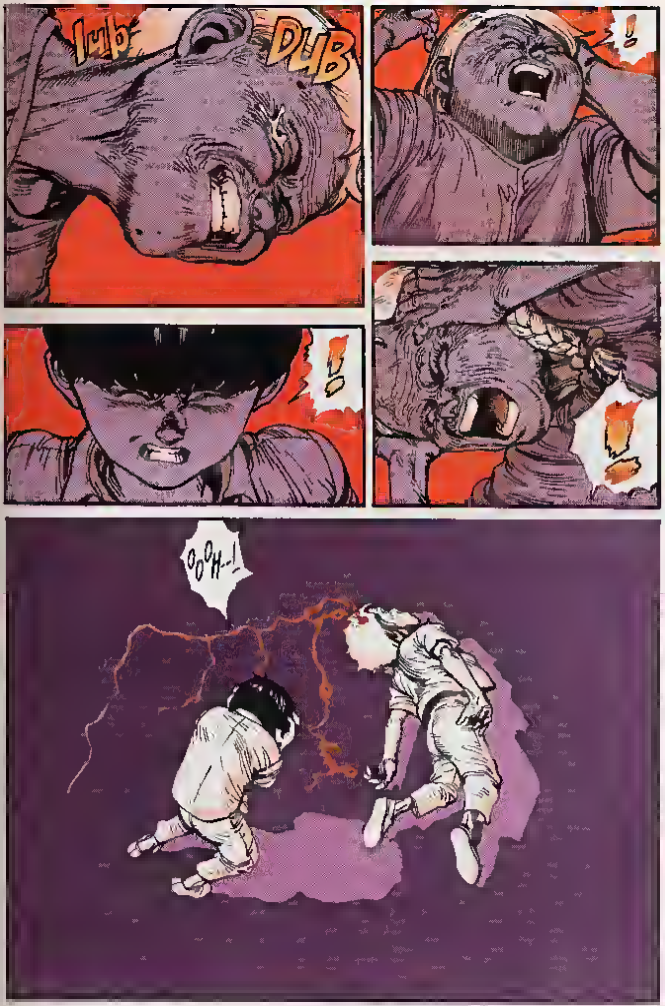
AKIRA!
IT REALLY IS!
IT'S REALLY YOU!
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT!
CRUNK
YOU REMEMBER ME, DON'T YOU? I'M TAKASHI!
?!

I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING
AND DO YOU REMEMBER MASARU? AND KIYOKO?

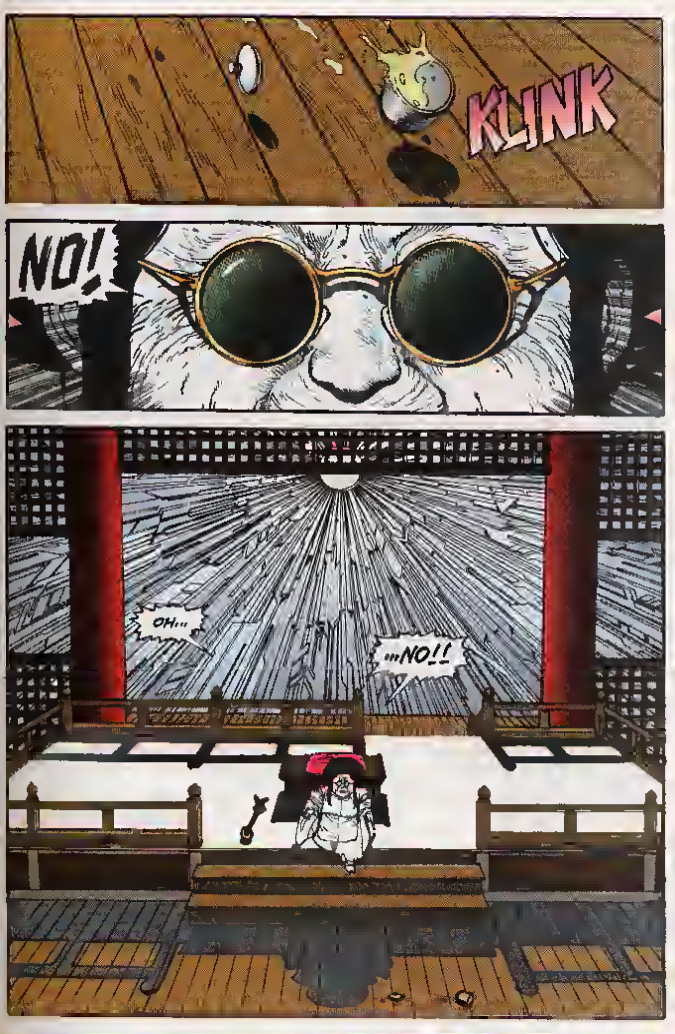

BLAM

I MISSED!
!
KLAT
UP THERE!
TAKASHI!
FIIIRE!
AAAGH!
BUDDABUDDABUDDA

.....
AA...
A'EEE!
!
TAKSHI!
!
.....

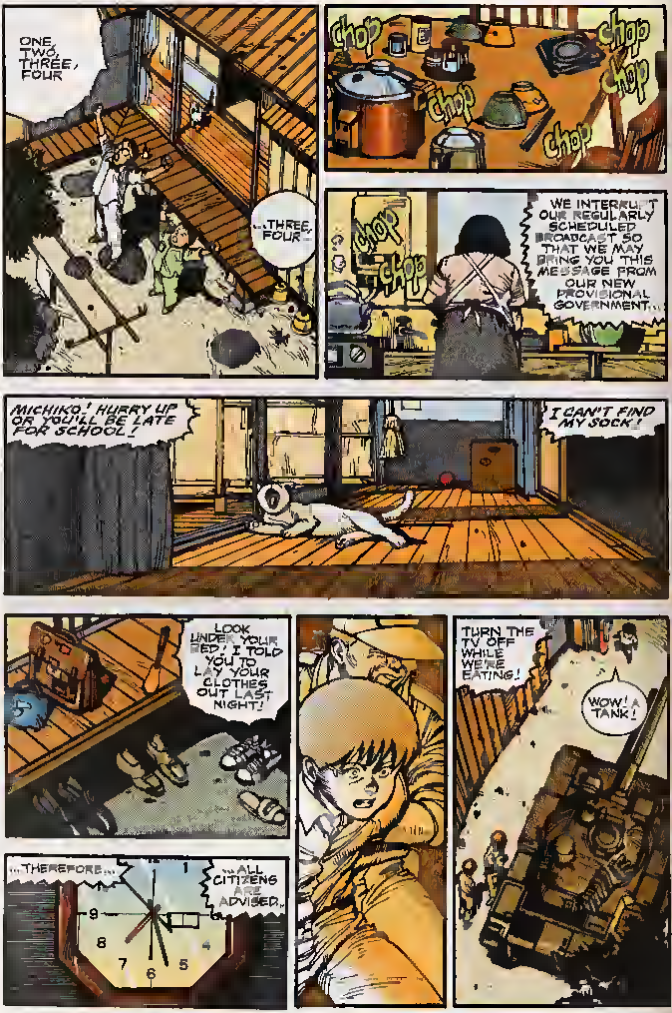

THUD
THUD
!
!
OOOH--!

...AK...
...AKIRA?!
lub
DUB

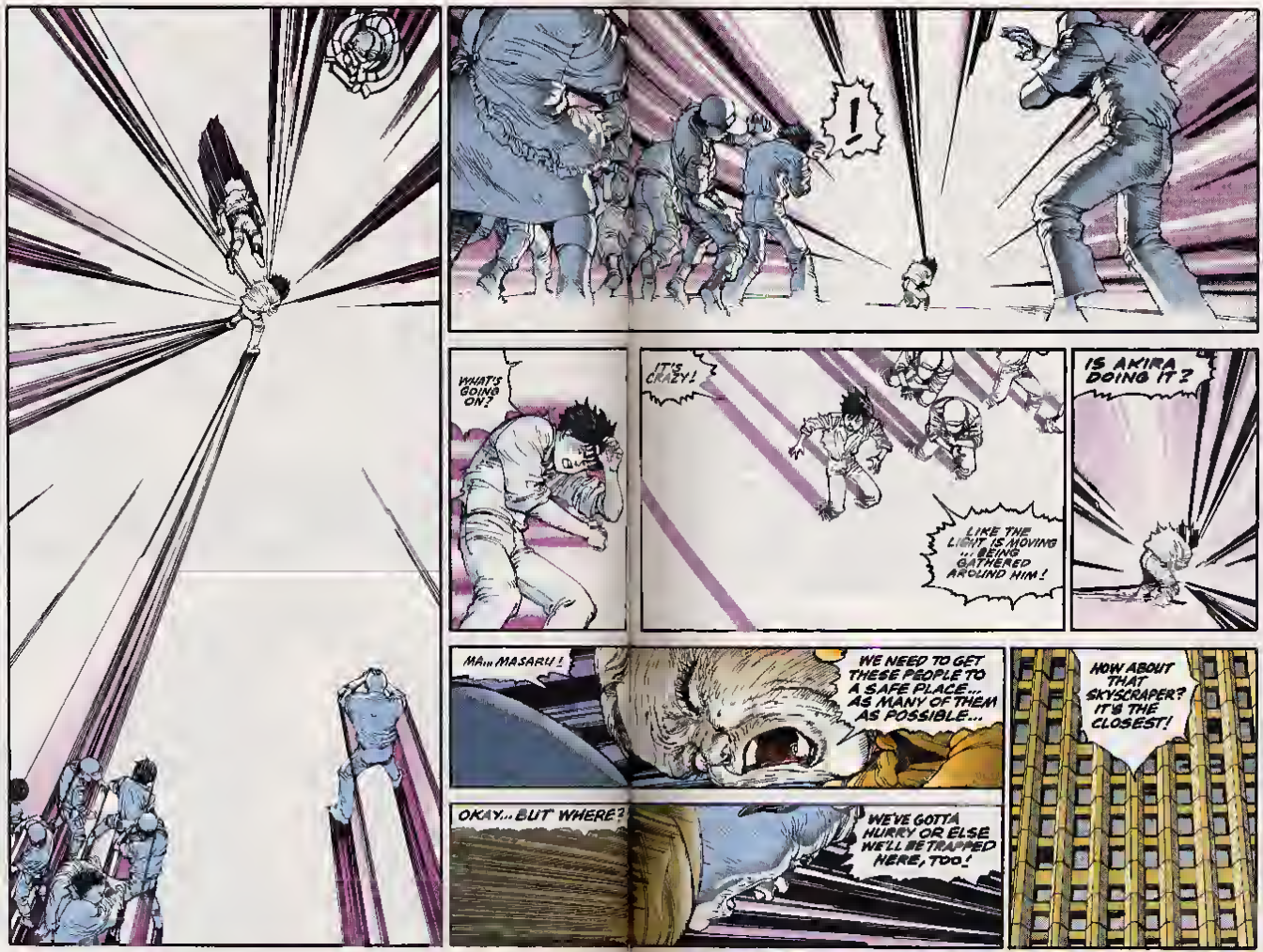

KLINK
NO!
OH...
...NO!!

ARRRRGH!
I DIDN'T THINK HE HAD A SCREAM LIKE THAT IN HIM

NO, AKIRA!
STOP IT!
YOU MUSTN'T!

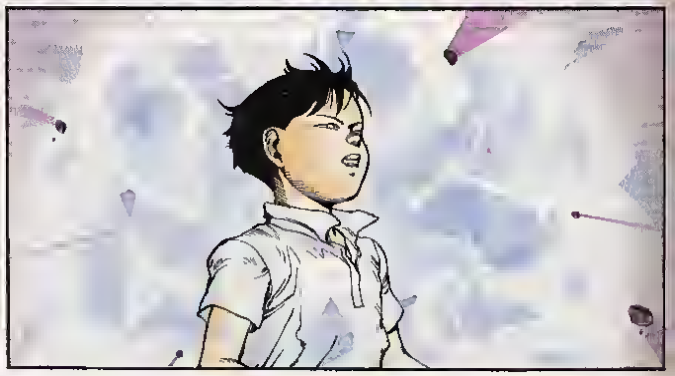

ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR
...THREE, FOUR
Chop
Chop
Chop
Chop
Chop
Chop
WE INTERRUPT OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED BROADCAST SO THAT WE MAY BRING YOU THIS MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT...
MICHIKO! HURRY UP OR YOU'LL BE LATE FOR SCHOOL!
I CAN'T FIND MY SOCK!
LOOK UNDER YOUR BED, I TOLD YOU TO LAY YOUR CLOTHES OUT LAST NIGHT!
...THEREFORE...
...ALL CITIZENS ARE ADVISED...
TURN THE TV OFF WHILE WE'RE EATING!
WOW! A TANK!

"TO REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE."
ALL PUBLIC AND MEDICAL FACILITIES, AT BOTH THE NATIONAL AND THE LOCAL LEVELS...
DADDY, WHAT'S A COUP D'ETAT?
I'VE GOT TO CALL THE OFFICE!
CAN I STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL?
CAN I, DADDY? HUNH? PLEASE!
ALRIGHT!
WHAT A MESS!
HEY, MAYUMI, DID YOU HEAR WHAT THEY SAID ON TV? NO SCHOOL! LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES!
BUT WE HAVE TO STAY INSIDE!
HOW COME?
WE'RE UNDER MARTIAL LAW.
IN THIS CRISIS ALL PATRIOTIC CITIZENS WILL BE CALLED UPON TO SET PERSONAL FEELINGS ASIDE AND...
'MORNING, MOMMY.
YOU OVERSLEPT THIS MORNING, PUMPKIN. GO WASH YOUR FACE!

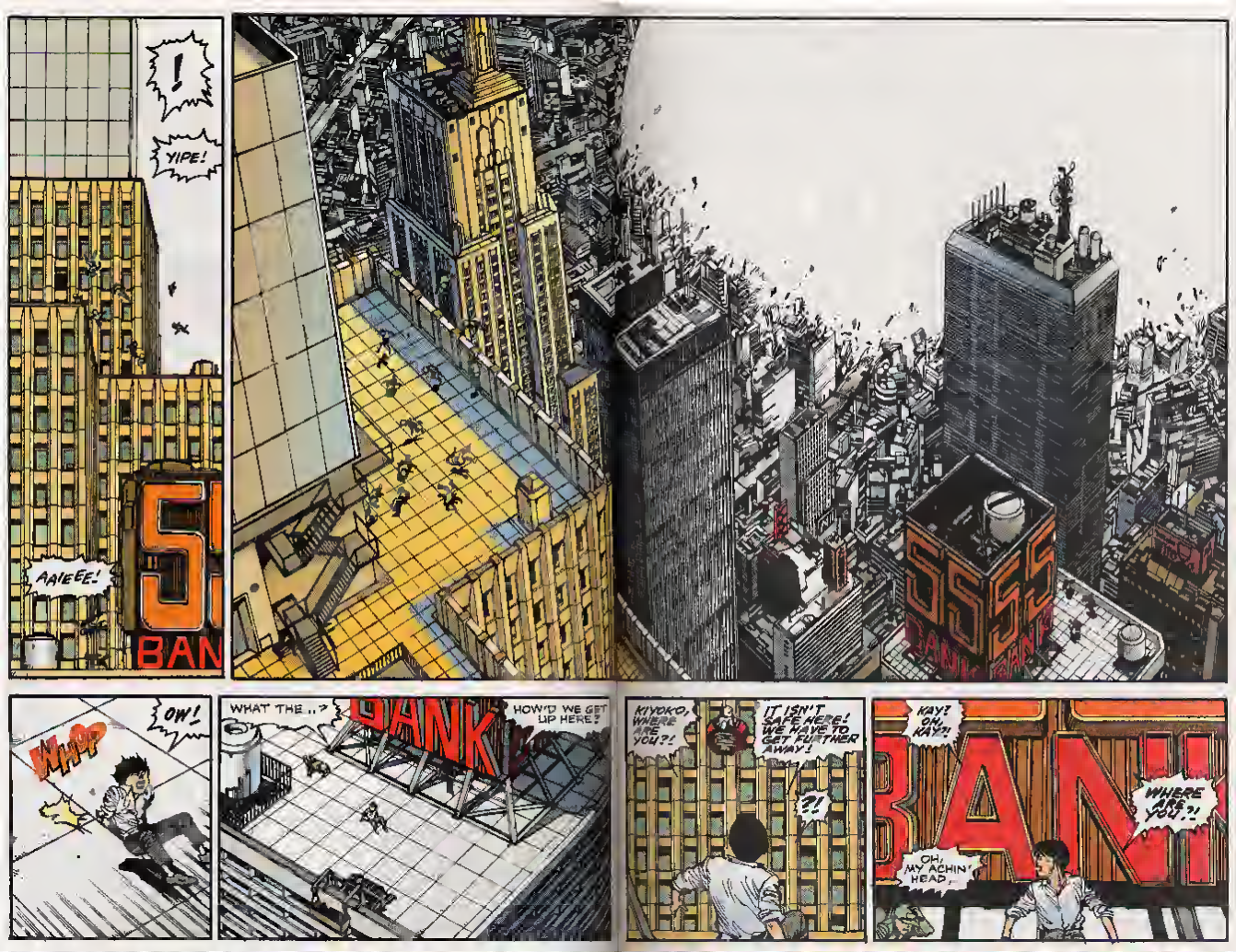

!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
IT'S CRAZY!
LIKE THE LIGHT IS MOVING ... BEING GATHERED AROUND HIM!
IS AKIRA DOING IT?
MA... MASARU!
WE NEED TO GET THESE PEOPLE TO A SAFE PLACE... AS MANY OF THEM AS POSSIBLE...
HOW ABOUT THAT SKYSCRAPER? IT'S THE CLOSEST!
OKAY... BUT WHERE?
WE'VE GOTTA HURRY OR ELSE WE'LL BE TRAPPED HERE, TOO!

HURRY!

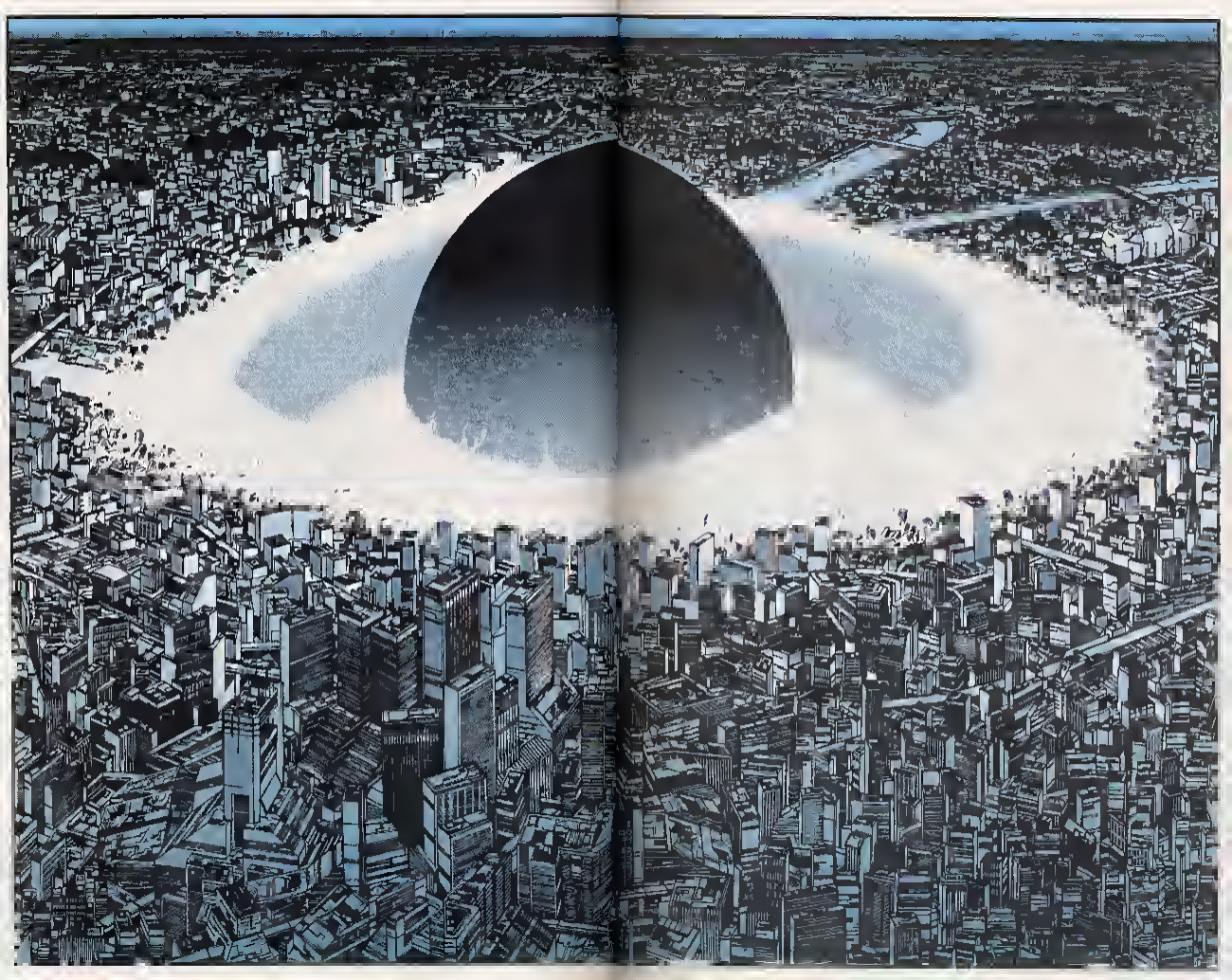
EEP!
?!

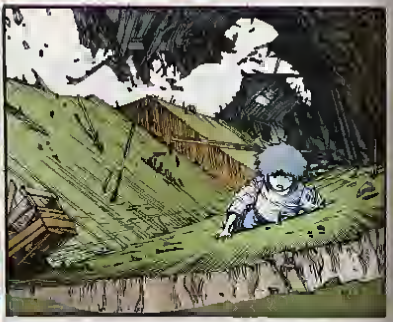


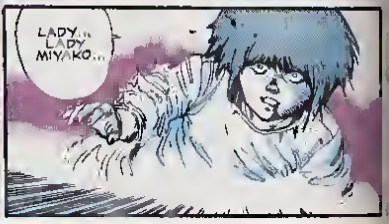
KANEDA!
KAY!


!
YIPE!
AAIEEE!
BAN
WHIP
OW!
WHAT THE..?
DANK
HOW'D WE GET UP HERE?
KIYOKO, WHERE ARE YOU?!
IT ISN'T SAFE HERE! WE HAVE TO GET FURTHER AWAY!
?!
KAY? OH, KAY?!
WHERE ARE YOU?!
OH, MY ACHIN' HEAD...

KANEDAAA!
!
KAY? ARE YOU U THERE?!
KIYOKO!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I COULDN'T LEAVE POOR TAKASHI BEHIND.
!
AAAAAH! TAKASHI!
HURRY! NO TIME TO LOSE!
55
BANK



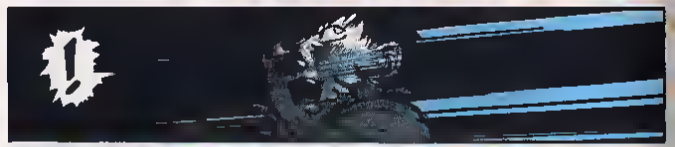



LADY...
LADY
MIYAKO...

SAAAK!

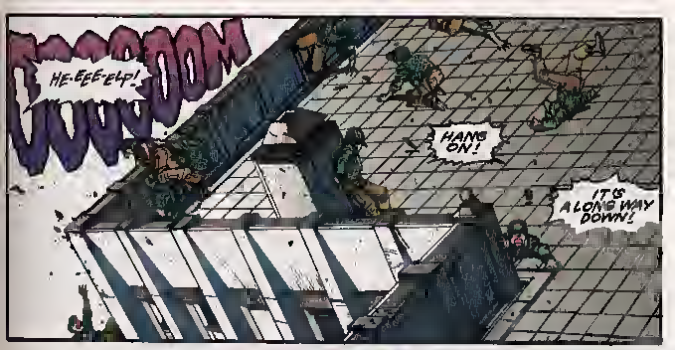
HOLY SHIT!
KANEDA, RUN!
BANK
!

KI

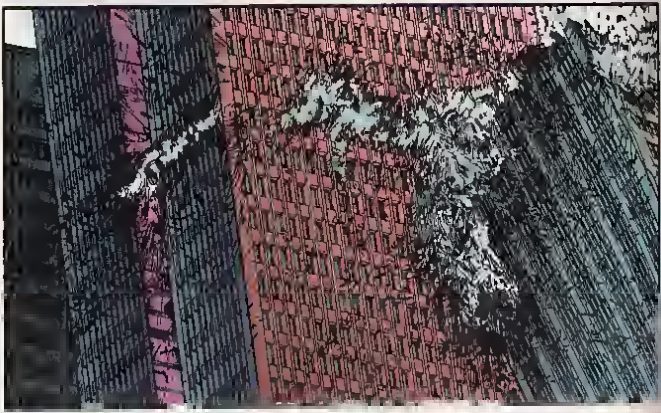

1

KANEDA!

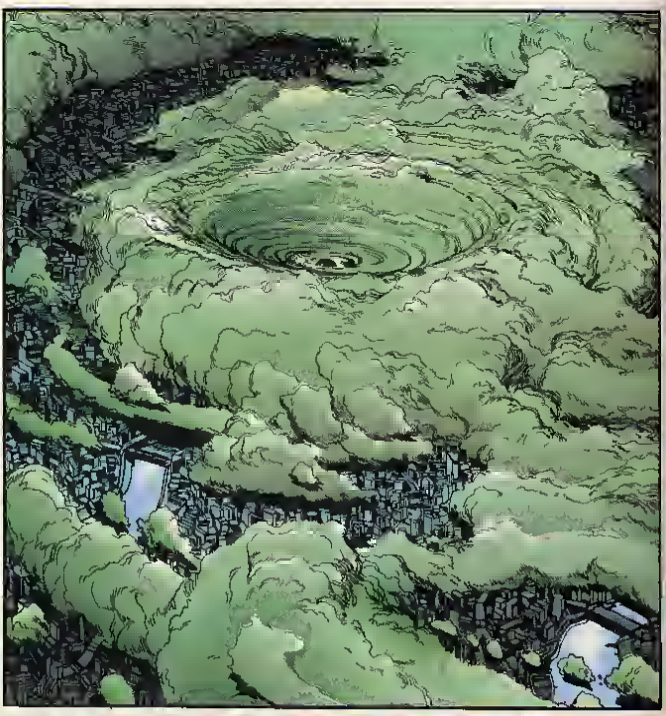
KA...Y

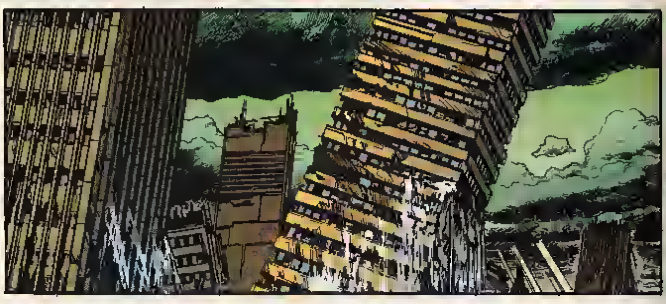

KABOOO

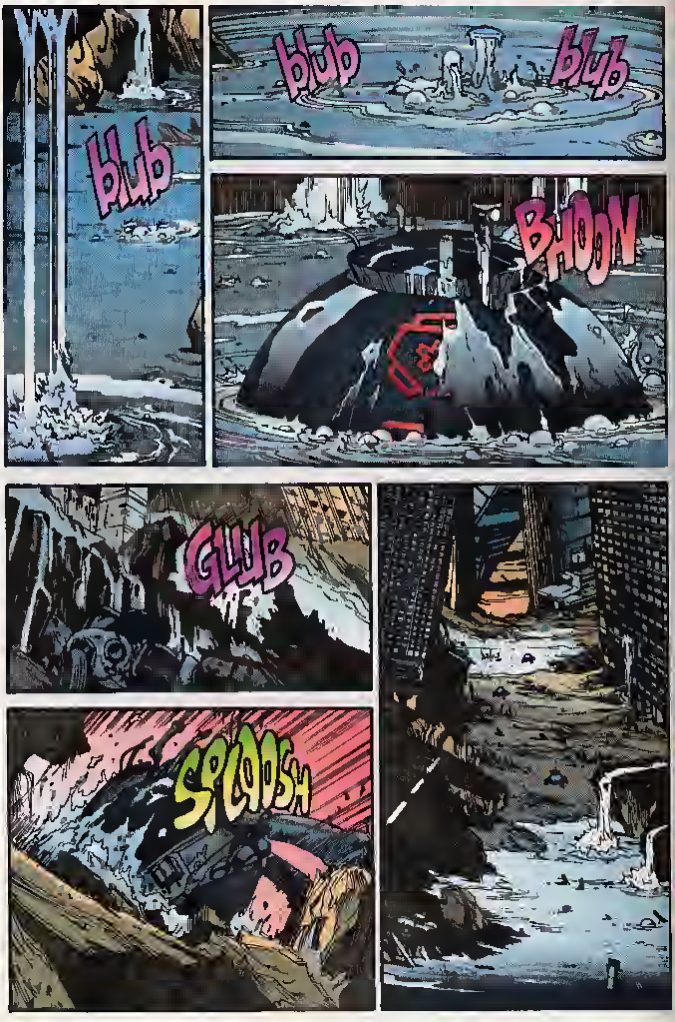
OOOOOHM

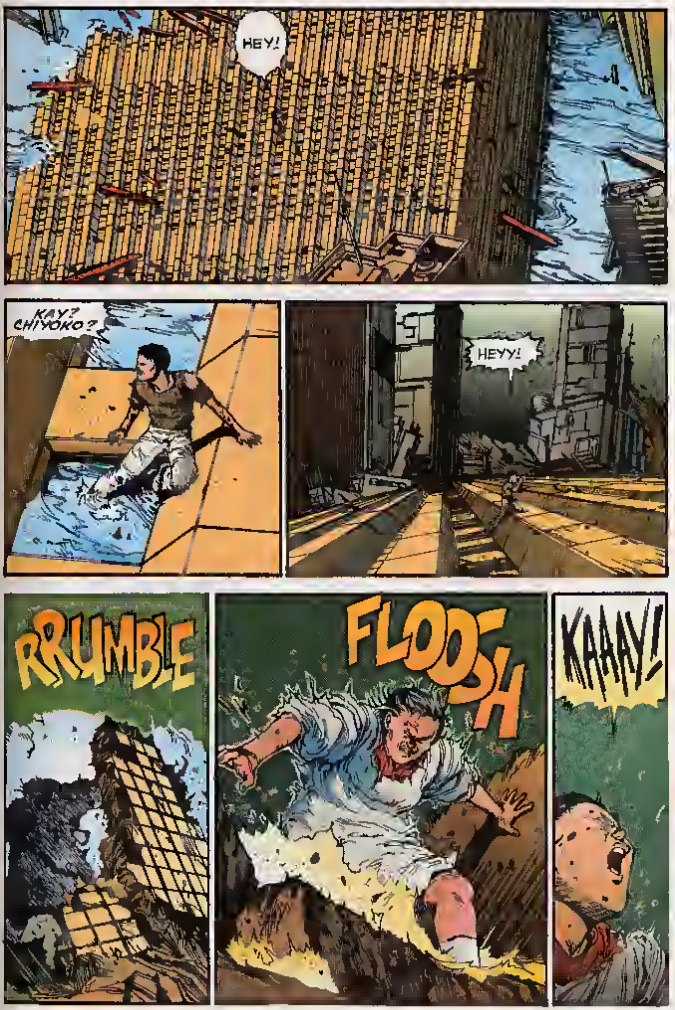


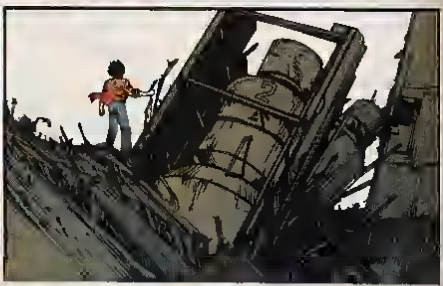
BURGER

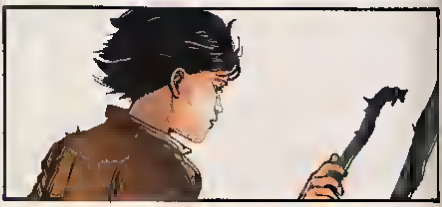


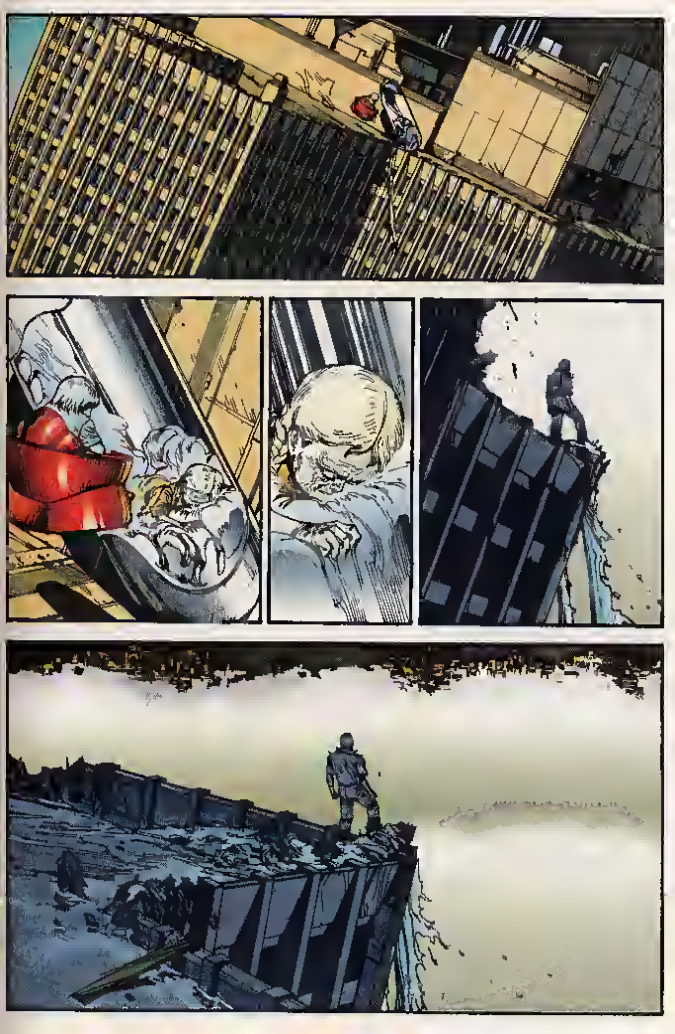



blub
blub
blub
BHOOM
GLUB
SPLOOSH

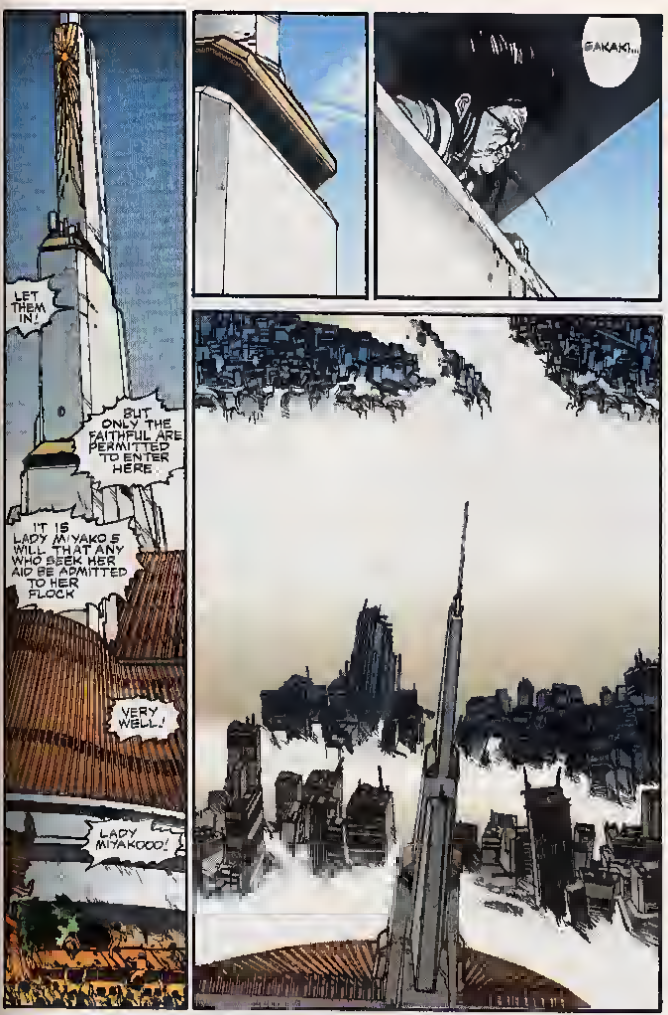

HEY!
KAY? CHIYOKO?
HEYY!
RRUMBLE
FLOOSH
KAAAY!

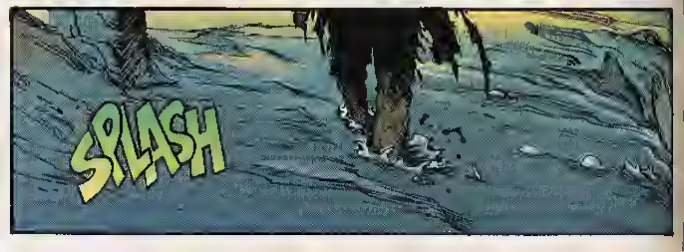






LADY MIYAKO!
OPEN THE GATE!
HELP US, LADY MIYAKO!
HAVE MERCY ON US


LET THEM IN!
BUT ONLY THE FAITHFUL ARE PERMITTED TO ENTER HERE.
IT IS LADY MIYAKO'S WILL THAT ANY WHO SEEK HER AID BE ADMITTED TO HER FLOCK
VERY WELL!
LADY MIYAKOOO!
GAKAK...


SPLASH

NEXT ISSUE: **EMPEROR OF CHAOS**

One of the most frequently asked questions about **Akira** is "When is the animated movie coming out in the United States?" Although the definite dates for most showings have not yet been set, Epic is proud to announce the limited release of the English-language version of **Akira** in six cities over the 1989 holiday season.

The theme of the film is similar to Epic's **Akira** comic. The storyline, however, has been shortened and thoroughly reconstructed. This allows for a more concise movie, while preserving the suspense element of the comic.

Confirmed showings of **Akira** are as follows:

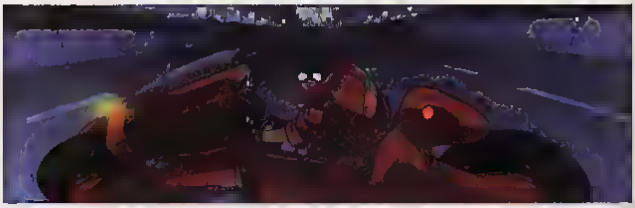
San Francisco, CA
Roxie Theater
Akira will open approximately December 26 and play for two weeks.

Berkeley, CA
U.C. Theater
January 12–15
Washington, D.C.
Biograph Theater
Film will open approximately
December 26 and play for two weeks
Portland, OR
Cinema 21
December 29–January 4

Unconfirmed dates include
Seattle, WA
Neptune Theater
Between the end of December
and mid-January
Santa Cruz, CA
Saech Mill Cinema
Between February 15 and 21, 1990

Akira will probably play Boston and Los Angeles sometime in January, and Chicago in the early spring. New Yorkers can expect to see **Akira** in the summer of 1990.

Although there are no plans to release the film on videocassette or broadcast television for the next year, disappointed fans who cannot find their hometown on the previous list needn't worry—**Akira** will open in at least 40 other cities in 1990. We'll keep readers updated.



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KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

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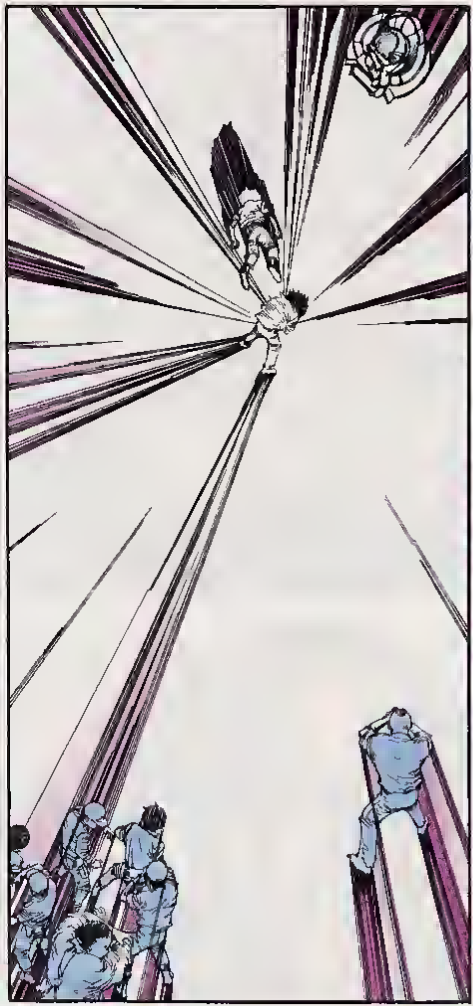
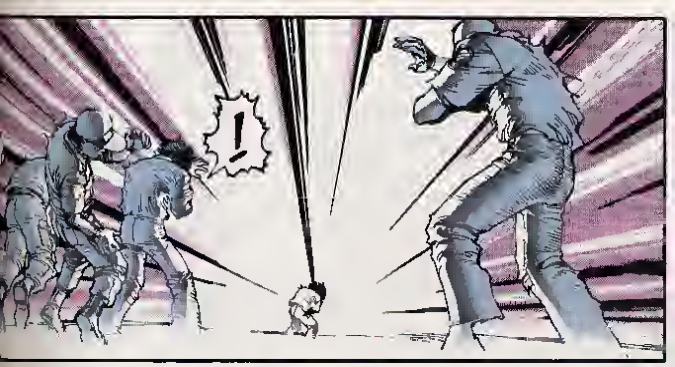
I love um

I buy um

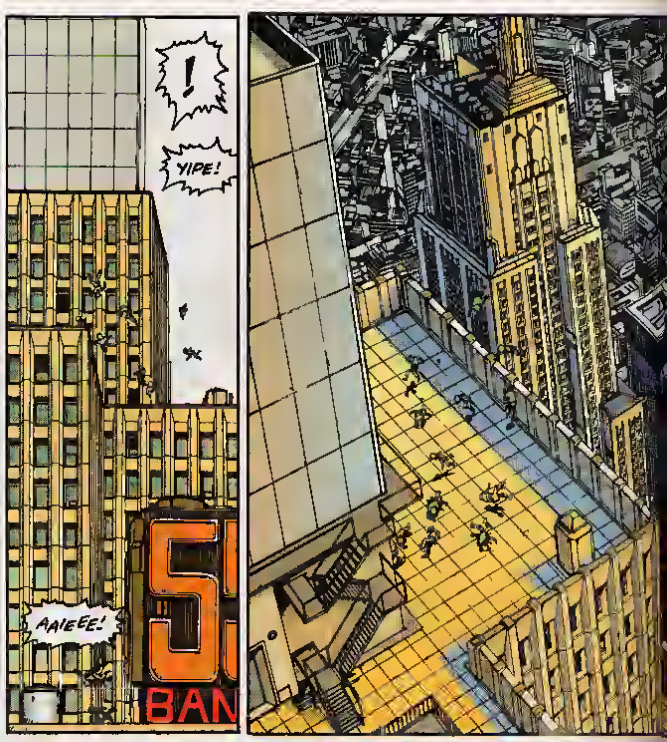
I preserve um

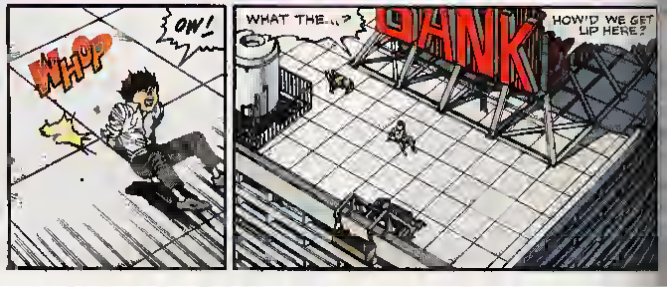

WHAT'S GOING ON?
MA... MASARU!
OKAY... BUT WHERE?


!

IT'S CRAZY!
LIKE THE LIGHT IS MOVING ... BEING GATHERED AROUND HIM!
IS AKIRA DOING IT?

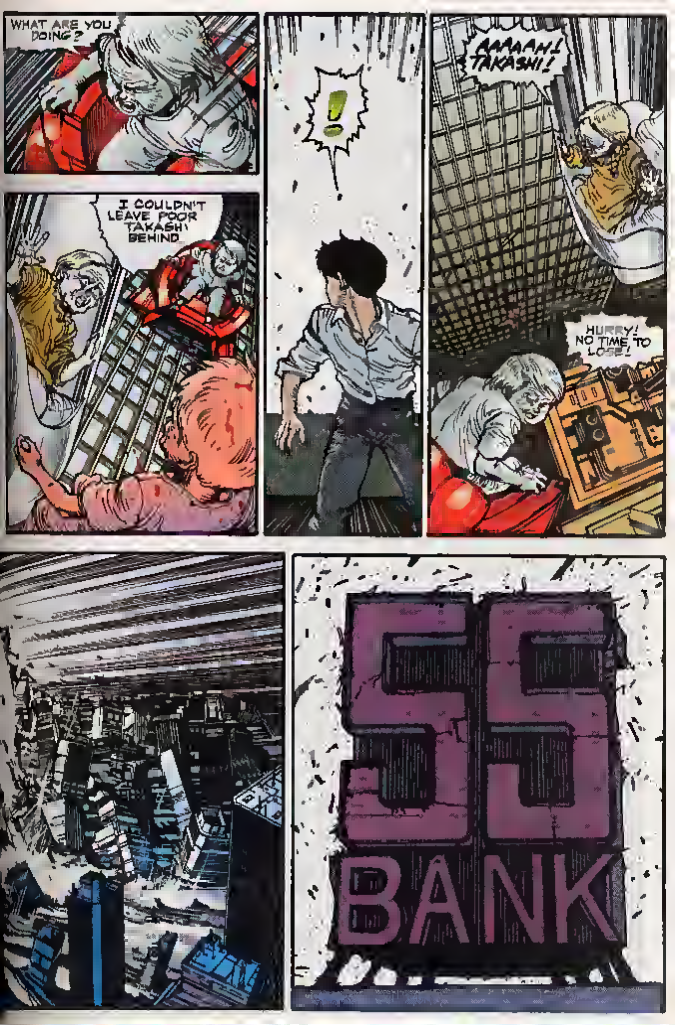
WE NEED TO GET THESE PEOPLE TO A SAFE PLACE... AS MANY OF THEM AS POSSIBLE...
WE'VE GOTTA HURRY OR ELSE WE'LL BE TRAPPED HERE, TOO!
HOW ABOUT THAT SKYSCRAPER? IT'S THE CLOSEST!

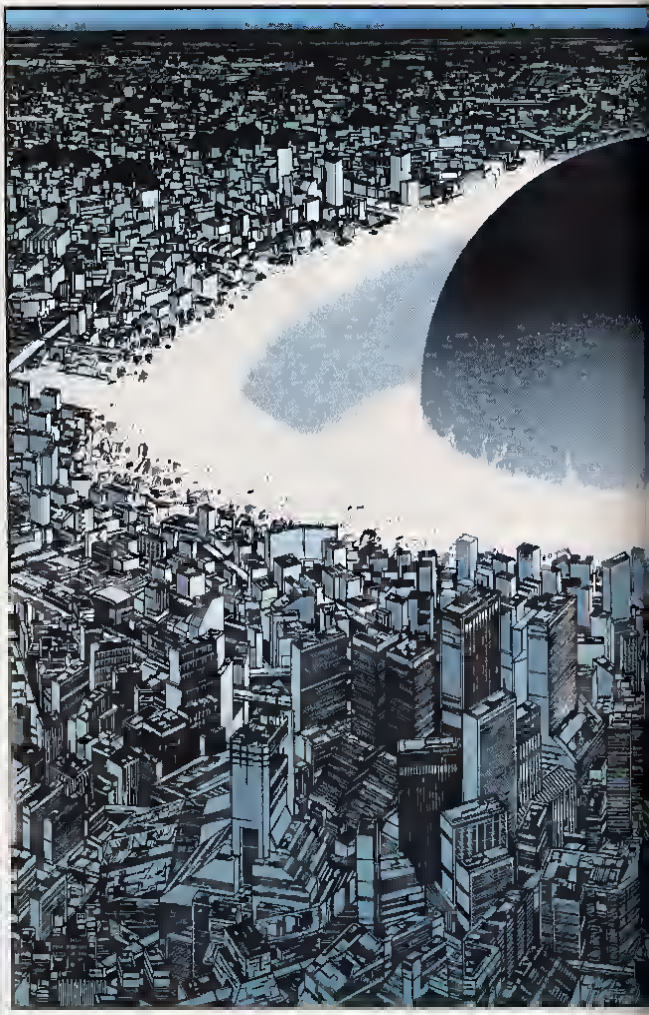

!
YIPE!
AAIEEE!
BAN


OW!
NHH
WHAT THE...?
DANK
HOW'D WE GET UP HERE?

KIYOKO, WHERE ARE YOU?!
IT ISN'T SAFE HERE! WE HAVE TO GET FURTHER AWAY!
?!
KAY? OH, KAY?!
WHERE ARE YOU?!
OH, MY ACHIN' HEAD.

KANEDAAA!
!
KAY? ARE YOU UP THERE?!
KIYOKO!


WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I COULDN'T LEAVE POOR TAKASHI BEHIND
!
AAAAAH! TAKASHI!
HURRY! NO TIME TO LOSE!
55
BANK



HOLY SHIT!
KANEDA, RUN!

BANK
!